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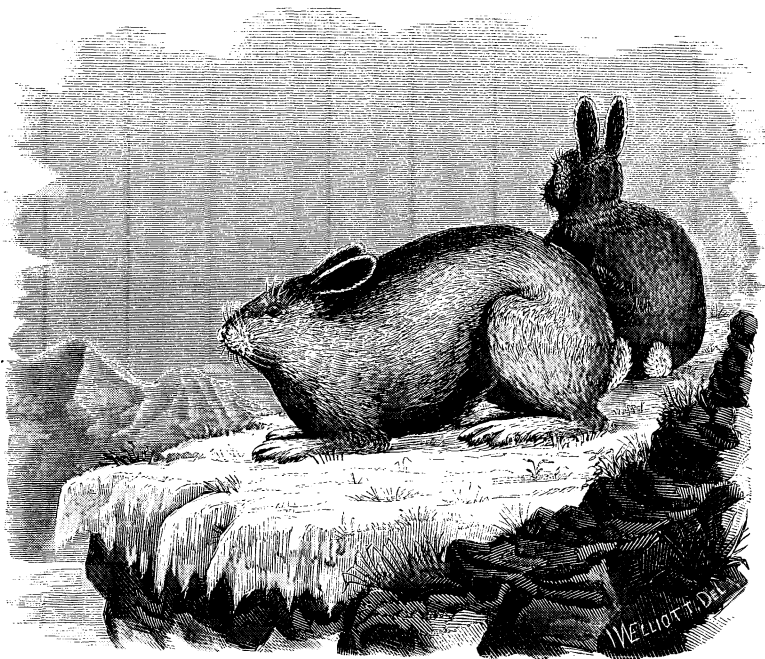
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A NEW SPECIES OF HARE FROM THE SUMMIT OF
WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS.

BY PROF. F. V. HAYDEN.



.In the summer of 1860, the U. S. Exploring Expedition
under the command of Capt. William F. Raynolds, U.S.A.,

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crossed over the Wind River Mountains into the valley of the Columbia River. The writer was connected with that expedition as Geologist and Naturalist. May 30th, we camped at the foot of the eastern slope of the mountains, at the source of Wind River. It was a beautiful locality, and at this time the spring had fully come. Myriads of flowers covered the valley, and the trees and shrubs were clothed with foliage of the peculiar bright green color characteristic of this mountain scenery. On the north side of this valley were the rugged basaltic ridges of the western end of the Big Horn Range, where it united itself with the Wind River Range, and on our left were the forest-covered, gently descending slopes of the Wind River Range. Fine springs issued from the sides of the mountains everywhere, and all the little branches were full of trout.

On the morning of May 31st, we ascended the eastern slope, and gradually the vegetation dwindled down in size, so that it presented an Alpine character, and before reaching the summit, we were pushing our way through ten or fifteen feet of snow. Upon the summits of these mountains quite large areas are covered with perpetual snow, portions of which melt away in midsummer. Every few moments the clouds dropped down rain or snow, and then the sun shone out as bright as ever. We were obliged to spend several days on the summit of these mountains. So far as I could ascertain the fauna on the west side of the Wind River Mountains is quite distinct from that on the eastern side. One day I noticed a group of singular tracks on the snow which seemed different from any I had ever observed in the West, and they appeared to belong to an enormous species of hare. Descending the western slope about a third of the way from the summit, we saw a number of these animals in the little patches of pine forests, and succeeded in capturing several of them, old and young. I saw at once that it was a species not previously observed by me, and most probably undescribed. The following is a brief description of this hare :

Lepus Bairdii Hayden, Baird's hare. — Summer dress : General color gray, glossed behind, especially on the rump, with sooty black ; feet and tail, and the edges of the ears white, the latter not darker at tip. Nape sooty. In winter pure white. Length to base of tail about sixteen inches (tail mutilated). Ear three inches high ; hind feet six inches long.

This interesting new species of Alpine hare, as far as our observations extend, is confined to the Wind River Mountains, where it is by no means rare, and forms a characteristic feature of the landscape, its unusually broad feet expanding with each step, forming a set of veritable snowshoes, enabling it to pass rapidly over the surface of the snow without sinking. It is readily distinguished from Townsend's Hare, or the Missouri Jackass Rabbit by its smaller size, much shorter ears, and different colors. It is considerably larger than *L. sylvaticus* and *artemisia*, with disproportionately large feet and sooty nape, being neither chestnut nor reddish. In some respects it resembles *Lepus campestris* of the Hudson Bay country, which, however, is more like *L. sylvaticus*, although much grayer, and like *L. Bairdii*, with a sooty nape. It is, perhaps, with the true Polar Hare (*Lepus glacialis*) that it is to be compared the most properly. Its summer dress is much the same, but it is much smaller, and lacks the black tips of the ears. The hind feet are, however, of nearly the same size.

This hare seems to be restricted to a comparatively small area on the summits of these mountains, near Fremont's Peak, about longitude 110°, and latitude 43°, so far as our present knowledge extends ; and its natural habitat appears to be among the perpetual snows, from which it descends at pleasure to the little open spots on the slope for its food. If it were widely distributed it could not so long have eluded the observations of so many travellers who have crossed these mountains before and since 1860. But at this immediate locality it appeared to be abundant. It subsists on grass, but is very fond of the bark, buds and leaves of small

shrubs, especially the pine buds. Its meat is very white and tender, affording the most delicate food for the traveller. For tenderness and fineness of fibre, the meat of this hare not only differs from, but surpasses all others of the West. It holds a similar position among the hares that the Dusky Grouse does among the Western Grouse; both have white and very delicate meat, and prefer to obtain their food from the pine shrubs.

Descending the western slope of the mountains into the valley of the Snake Fork, we were again surrounded with all the indications of spring. The trees were clothed with fresh green foliage, and myriads of flowers were in bloom, and all signs of winter had passed away. In the course of a single day one may ascend to the region of perpetual snow, and descend again to that of spring and summer.

THE SAND MARTIN.

BY AUGUSTUS FOWLER.

THE Sand Martins (*Hirundo riparia*) visit their accustomed breeding-places in Essex County, Massachusetts, usually the first week in May, in companies sometimes to the number of fifty pairs. They select the bank of some river, or the sides of any large excavation, in which they dig a hole from one to three feet below the surface of the ground in a straight, horizontal direction. The holes are usually from two to three feet in length, and often within a few inches of each other; the entrance and passage-way to the nest being of an elliptic form. They prefer the most perpendicular banks, with a stratum of sandy loam below the soil. They live together in the most social manner, and unlike the White-bellied Swallow (*Hirundo bicolor*) are seldom seen to quarrel with each other. If at any time one of them should, in digging his hole, intrude upon the passage